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12 November 1947

MEMORANDUM TO: Admiral Hillenkotter

In connection with the thorough and careful appraisal of the technical achievement of certain countries it has been found that availability and language difficulties are an impediment, especially in the case of Russian material.

Mutual discussions between the Chief of the Scientific Branch of ORE, personnel in the Research and Development Board, experts at the Library of Congress on Slavic literature, and technical editors of such periodicals as Chemical Abstracts, has developed the following information.

1. This country receives through various channels nearly 100% of the published and distributed material which is freely circulated in Russia.
2. The technical literature is well covered in so far as receipt and in the field of chemistry is well abstracted in Chemical Abstracts.
3. The coverage in other physical sciences in abstract journals (particularly Science Abstracts) is fair.
4. The coverage in other technical fields in abstract journals is poor.
5. In part this failure to adequately cover in abstract journals is a lack of knowledge as to the existence of the article.

It is proposed that there should be issued a list of periodicals received from Russia with titles and authors of articles translated into English. An example of such a list is attached. (Enclosure A)

At the present time abstracting of Russian articles is being done by the Office of Operations based on broad subject requests and a reliance on the translator as to whether the article is of concern with the required subject. Many of the articles that are abstracted are also available as unclassified abstracts in published magazines and have been made by translators who are scientists.

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It is felt that if the titles of articles were available that a selection by the expert concerned of those articles to be abstracted or translated would be made with a better technical opinion and that there would be a wider use of the available material.

It is proposed that this list of titles of articles from Russian Periodicals be issued on all periodicals received in this country and that there be indicated where photo copies of the original can be obtained. It is felt that the inclusion of all periodicals, such as Drama, Music, Art, Education, Economics, Physical Culture, etc. as well as the purely technical magazines would lead to the proposed project a "cultural" atmosphere which would tend to reduce the apparent "official" interest in technical material.

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The production of such a list with about 500 copies would from the science viewpoint require about 15 pages a week and would cost about [REDACTED] per year to produce at the Library of Congress. The inclusion of all Russian Periodicals would approximately double this, i.e., 30 pages a week and cost about [REDACTED] a year to produce.

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To further produce the appearance of a "cultural" movement it is proposed that some international agency such as the [REDACTED] be approached to provide the financial support for the "cultural" half at least and that if possible some agency such as the [REDACTED] be approached on the publication side so as to relieve as far as possible the appearance of "government" operation and also to permit a better distribution since they already publish a number of periodical guides.

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It would be desirable to issue these "table of contents" sheets with separate sheets for each periodical so that material to be collected into annual table of contents by journal and if possible some supplementary sheet be issued from time to time to indicate location and availability of translation or abstract.

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Specifically I would like to request (1) an initial sum of [REDACTED] to be assigned to the Library of Congress, either directly or through RDB or the existing ONR contract (the latter could be easily amended to cover this) to initiate the work and (2) permission to contact on an informal basis and in my capacity as [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] regarding the general issuance of such material so as to make it available to American universities, libraries, and research workers.

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